

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING November 4, 2021 – MINUTES

Committee Members

Present

Lora Taylor, Committee
Chair
Hunter Adkins
Erica Brown, HHSC
Ronnie Browning
Mary Durham, Council
Chair
Sandra Magaña, UT-CDS
Meagan Orsag, TAMU-CDD
Randell Resneder
Eric Shahid
Robert Schier III, Council
Vice-Chair
Kim Torres

Committee Members

Absent

Michael Peace

Kristen Cox
Mary Faithfull, DRTx

Guests Present

Jennifer Bacak
Christina Bryant
Alex Cogan
Maggie Haynie
Debra Haney
Linda Litzinger
Matthew Lovitt
Laura Marquez
Jolene Sanders-Foster

Regional Coordinators

Present

Morgan Bradley
Erin Fogarty
Rosa Guel

Skyler Mueller
Shelby Vaughn

Staff Members Present

Beth Stalvey, Executive
Director
Scott Daigle
Lauren Gerken
Sabrina Gonzalez
Stacey Kaleh
Linda Logan
Evan Marczynski
Sylvia Medina
Richard Rendon II
Fernando Rodriguez
Rey Valldejuli
Koren Vogel
Rosalin Willis

Call to Order

The Public Policy Committee of the Texas Council for Developmental convened on Thursday, November 4, 2021, at the TCDD offices, 6201 East Oltorf, Suite 600, Austin, TX 78741 as well as virtually using the Zoom platform. Committee Chair Lora Taylor called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM. A quorum was present.

1. Introductions

Committee members, staff, and guests were introduced.

2. Public Comments

Jolene Sanders-Foster, Advocacy Director, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD), provided comments regarding public schools repeatedly calling parents for early pickup of students experiencing behavioral distress with no plan or documentation in the student's IEP. CTD has raised this issue, which it believes to be a violation of student rights under the federal IDEA, in two previous legislative

sessions.

3. **Consideration of August 5, 2021, Minutes**

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the August 5, 2021, Public Policy Committee meeting and no additions or corrections were noted.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the August 5, 2021, Public Policy Committee meeting.

MADE BY: Hunter Adkins

SECOND: Ronnie Browning

The motion **passed** unanimously.

4. **Chair's Remarks**

- A. Member Absences: Chair Lora Taylor acknowledged the absence of Public Policy Committee Members Michael Peace, Kristen Cox, and Patty Anderson.
- B. Chair's Quarterly Activities: Chair Lora Taylor discussed her activities of the previous quarter, specifically her participation in the Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee and the All-Inclusive Emergency Planning Workshop.

5. **Members Quarterly Activities Report**

Committee members provided updates from the previous quarter regarding their involvement in advocacy and other activities.

6. **Selection of Nominating Committee Member**

Committee members discussed the nomination of a Public Policy Committee representative to the Nominating Committee. They also discussed approval of an alternate, in case the nominee was unable to serve.

MOTION: To approve Hunter Adkins as committee representative.

MADE BY: Meagan Orsag

SECOND: Eric Shahid

The motion **passed** unanimously.

MOTION: To approve Randell Resneder as alternate committee representative.

MADE BY: Hunter Adkins

SECOND: Ronnie Browning

The motion **passed** unanimously.

7. **Legislative Update**

- A. Legislative Champions: Public Policy Director Scott Daigle provided an update on the lawmaker and staff legislative champions chosen by the Council at the

August 2021 meeting. He shared several examples of reactions by honorees to the awards. Members discussed the value of building ongoing relationships with lawmakers and staff.

B. Legislative Special Sessions. Daigle presented a wrap-up of the recent special sessions of the 87th Texas Legislature. He highlighted topic areas of legislation that passed. He also spoke on the impact of redistricting to the makeup of the Legislature, and provided a list of lawmakers who have announced that they will not run for reelection to their current office.

C. Interim Charges. Daigle discussed recommendations for legislative interim charges, and the policy staff's efforts to develop a list in coordination with other advocates and advocacy organizations. He explained the timelines and process for submission of the recommendations.

8. Future Projects for State Plan Implementation

A. Poll Watcher Training on Assistance of Voters with Disabilities. Public Policy Analyst Lauren Gerken presented an executive summary for a grant to fund supplemental poll watcher training, through the creation of video and other materials, with specific focus on assisting voters with disabilities.

MOTION: To recommend Council approval of up to \$75,000 for one one-year project on Poll Watcher Training on Assistance of Voters with Disabilities.

MADE BY: Randell Resneder

SECOND: Hunter Adkins

The motion **passed** unanimously.

B. Disability Awareness for Elected Officials and Staff. Public Policy Director Daigle led a discussion of a possible grant project that would fund training and/or informational resources for elected officials and their staff on how to interact with people with disabilities. The discussion focused on physical and communication barriers and the most helpful formats for providing information to officials, including videos and brochures on issues such as using people first and identify first language as well as ableism in the office setting.

MOTION: To request that policy staff create an executive summary to be considered by the committee at its February 2022 meeting.

MADE BY: Kim Torres

SECOND: Randell Resneder

The motion **passed** unanimously.

9. State and Federal Policy Update

Staff gave an update on their activities related to attending and presenting at conferences and submitting legislative input.

Public Policy Analyst Sabrina Gonzalez summarized policy presentations made during the quarter, including a collaborative presentation with Public Policy Analyst Lauren Gerken titled “Disability 101” for RAICES, a nonprofit organization advocating for refugees and immigrants. The presentation discussed person first and identity first language, models of disability, and the stigmatization of disability in society, especially immigrant communities. Executive Director Beth Stalvey shared the presentation with national partners.

Gonzalez also presented a brief overview of the 87th Texas Legislature to students at the Texas Technology Access Program.

Gerken presented information to Partners in Policymaking about ableism as well as person first and identity first language. She also discussed information that was provided by the TCDD Policy and Communications Teams in acknowledgment of October’s National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and comments submitted at the federal level regarding disability voting gaps and barriers.

10. Public Input on Committee Discussion

No public input on committee discussion was offered.

11. Future Agenda Items

Public Policy Director Daigle noted that committee members would be asked to begin reconsidering TCDD’s top public policy priorities at either the February or May 2022 meeting.

Daigle also indicated that members are likely to begin advocacy training for the legislative session earlier than previously done.

12. Other Discussion Items

No other discussion items were offered by members.

Adjourn

Committee Chair Taylor adjourned the Public Policy Committee at 4:00 PM.

Beth Stalvey, Secretary to the Council Date